

# RETURN TO USE INITIATIVE

## 2012 Demonstration Project

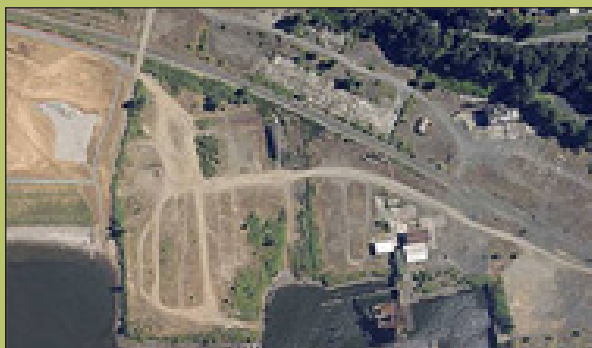
### PORTLAND HARBOR:

#### Portland, Oregon

**THE SITE:** The Portland Harbor Superfund site (the Site) includes a 10-mile stretch of the Willamette River between river mile 1.9 and 11.8 as well as upland source properties. This area is collectively known as the Portland Harbor. For over 150 years, the Willamette River and surrounding properties have served as an international port for commerce, and supported an industrial center with manufacturing, shipbuilding, petroleum, metal salvaging and power-generation activities. These industrial uses have resulted in contamination of surface water, ground water, soil and sediment at the Site. In 2000, the EPA placed the Site on the National Priorities List (NPL). The remedial investigation has found elevated levels of contaminants, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), heavy metals like mercury, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), dioxin/furans and pesticides.

Various potentially responsible parties (PRPs) are conducting site investigations and cleanup activities under EPA and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) oversight. PRPs have begun cleanup at several early action areas at the Site while other sitewide investigations are ongoing. One of these early action areas is the 35-acre Triangle Park. Industrial activities have contaminated soil and ground water in the Triangle Park portion of the Site.

**THE OPPORTUNITY:** Enrollment at the University of Portland has grown steadily over the past five years and the University has begun to outgrow its on-campus housing and facilities. The Triangle Park portion of the Site is located below the University's existing campus and along the Willamette River. The University recognized the value of this 35-acre area as it would provide an ideal location for an expansion of the campus. The University has created plans for



**PICTURED:** An aerial view of the property before construction on Triangle Park began. (Source: The EPA)

**POTENTIAL BARRIERS:** The University of Portland was concerned about potential liability if they purchased the Site and sought additional confirmation that they would remain a non-labile party.

**SOLUTION:** Through a Bona Fide Prospective Purchaser (BFPP) agreement that provided EPA oversight of the University's cleanup work, the University of Portland was able to purchase Triangle Park for redevelopment while remaining a non-labile party.



**PICTURED:** An aerial view of the University of Portland River Campus area. (Source: AMEC Environment and Infrastructure)

**BEFORE:** Former industrial property with contamination in river sediments, soil and ground water.

**AFTER:** Redevelopment of Triangle Park, a 35-acre riverfront portion of the Site, into the University of Portland's River Campus began with investigation and cleanup work funded by the University with EPA oversight.

the new University of Portland River Campus, which will enable the University to offer new academic buildings, athletic fields, and recreational and open space.

**POTENTIAL BARRIERS:** The University of Portland wanted to purchase the Triangle Park portion of the Site and, even though site investigations and cleanup activities continued at other portions of the Site, the University wanted to begin necessary cleanup and redevelopment soon to be able to meet their campus space needs. Although the University of Portland is a non-labile party with protection under Brownfields law, University officials were concerned that they could lose their liability exemption at the Site. In order to ease concerns, the University sought additional assurance that it would remain a non-labile party and that Triangle Park property would be safe for the reuse the University had planned.

**THE SOLUTION:** In part as a result of a Bona Fide Prospective Purchaser (BFPP) agreement with the EPA, the University of Portland purchased the 35-acre Triangle Park portion of the Site in 2009. The BFPP Agreement provides the University with additional assurance regarding cleanup work on the Triangle Park portion of the Site. As part of the BFPP agreement, the University of Portland agreed to provide funding for cleanup of the Triangle Park portion of the Site, which paves the way for the redevelopment of the parcel and creation of the University's River Campus. The BFPP Agreement provides for EPA oversight of the University's work to ensure that it is consistent with long-term cleanup activities for the Site as a whole. The University anticipates transformation of the former industrial property to a vibrant new campus space.

**THE SITE NOW:** The University has completed cleanup of the Triangle Park portion of the Site, which is now known as the University of Portland River Campus. The University will use the area for a new expansion of their existing campus, enabling the University to increase on-campus housing and add a new baseball stadium, a practice sports field, a rowing team dock and a trail for public access to the Willamette River waterfront.

With proactive land stewards and complementary cleanup and redevelopment efforts at the University of Portland's River Campus other groups are beginning to look at other portions of this large Superfund site for their reuse potential as well. Pier Partners has leased a 7-acre portion of the Site for an eco-friendly business park. Some prospective tenants of the park include a biochar production company, a wooden shipbuilding business and a solar-powered aquaponic greenhouse.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:** Chip Humphrey, Remedial Project Manager, at [humphrey.chip@epa.gov](mailto:humphrey.chip@epa.gov) or (503) 326-2678; Mark Ader, Remedial Project Manager, at [ader.mark@epa.gov](mailto:ader.mark@epa.gov) or (206) 553-1849; or Kira Lynch, Region 10 Superfund Redevelopment Coordinator, at [lynch.kira@epa.gov](mailto:lynch.kira@epa.gov) or (206) 553-2144.